

# Fact Sheet

## Cyberbullying

Cyber Bullying is a way of delivering covert psychological bullying. It uses information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour, by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.” Bill Belsey 2007

**Cyberbullying** can be described as any harassment, insults and humiliation that occurs through the electronic mediums such as email, mobile phones, social networking sites, instant messaging programs, chat rooms, web-sites and through the playing of online games.

### Forms of Cyberbullying can include

- ✚ Harassing and threatening messages
- ✚ Sending nasty SMS, IM's pictures or prank phone calls
- ✚ Using person's screen name or password to pretend to be them
- ✚ Forwarding others' private emails, messages, pictures or videos
- ✚ Posting mean or nasty comments or pictures
- ✚ Sending sexually explicit images – 'sexting'
- ✚ Intentionally excluding others from an online group

### What can I do if I am being cyberbullied?

- ✚ Tell your parents, teacher or other trusted adult – don't stay silent and hope it will go away – it won't!
- ✚ Save and store the emails, chat logs or SMS's in case of Police investigation
- ✚ Block and delete the bully from all contact lists
- ✚ Do not respond to nasty emails, chats, SMS or comments – this is what the bully wants so ignore them. (They will need your help to do this)
- ✚ Use the 'report abuse' button which all websites/applications have. Tell them the problems you are having and they are obligated to investigate.
- ✚ Have some 'down time' without computer or mobile. Give yourself some time away from technology just for a break
- ✚ If the bullying continues – delete your current email, msn, hotmail etc and start a new account. Only give your new details to a small list of trusted friends.
- ✚ Get a new phone number if being harassed on your phone. Report the problem to your phone company and insist on a new number for free.
- ✚ If the bullying continues get mum or dad to report the bullying to the Police. Each state has laws that prohibit online bullying and stalking. You don't have to put up with it.



# Fact Sheet

## What can I do if my child is being cyber bullied?

- ✚ Do not be angry with your child – remember that they are the victim and it is someone else doing the wrong thing
- ✚ Praise them for coming to you – this is a big step as most children are frightened to tell a parent about cyberbullying
- ✚ Save and store the emails, chat logs or SMS's in case of Police investigation
- ✚ Help your child to block and delete the bully from all contact lists
- ✚ Do not respond to nasty emails, chats, SMS or comments – this is what the bully wants so ignore them. (They will need your help to do this)
- ✚ Use the 'report abuse' button which all websites/applications have. Tell them the problems you are having and they are obligated to investigate.
- ✚ Have some 'down time' without computer or mobile (do not do this as punishment, rather as some peaceful time where they are not being bothered)
- ✚ If unwanted contact continues, consider deleting email, msn, hotmail etc and start a new account. Only give your new details to a small list of trusted friends.
- ✚ Get a new phone number if being harassed on your phone. Report the problem to your phone company and insist on a new number for free.
- ✚ Inform your child's school. It is important that they know what is going on so that they can monitor any issues at school.
- ✚ If ongoing report to Police. Each state has laws that prohibit online bullying and stalking. You don't have to put up with it.

## What if my child is the cyber bully?

- ✚ What can I do if my child is the cyber bully?
- ✚ Support the child, they are probably feeling awful too
- ✚ Talk to them about their actions
- ✚ Try and find out why they behaved in this way
- ✚ Ask them to imagine they were the victim...how would they feel (empathy)
- ✚ Work together to improve the situation...apology etc
- ✚ Work towards preventing further incidents
- ✚ Enlist the help of school, welfare staff, local GP or child psychologist